

## La Porte Police Department

3001 North 23<sup>rd</sup> Street La Porte, Texas 77571 281-471-3810 Fax: 281-470-1590



## Media Relations Information for 09/13/2012

Public Relations Officer – Sgt. John Krueger Office: 281-842-3161

## City Public Works and Police Department team-up to prevent identity theft



While banking procedures and online security features have become quite progressive in recent years, La Porte Police are reminding residents that identity theft still remains a global problem, even in local communities like La Porte. There are two common methods used by thieves to steal another's identify, high-tech and low-tech. High-tech methods are more difficult to combat as they generally involve the theft of personal information that was at one point voluntarily given out by the victim for legitimate purposes, like making on-line purchases or even buying a house. High-tech identity theft methods can be difficult for individual victims to combat.

Low-tech identity theft methods, such as dumpster diving, however, are easier to fight against because they attempt to take advantage of a victim's personal habits. Dumpster diving is one of the easiest identify theft techniques and simply involves one person searching through another person's trash in search of personal financial information. Once in the hands of the wrong person, personal financial information can be used to fraudulently open credit accounts, make illegal purchases, and even drain the victim's existing bank accounts.

Fortunately, there is a fairly simple way to prevent dumpster divers from getting access to your personal financial information. The solution is to shred all sensitive information, such as bank statements, credit card statements, utility bills, or letters from bill collectors, before they are disposed of. To make this process easier, the City of La Porte's Public Works Department will be hosting a FREE opportunity for area community members to shred their discarded paper documents.

The scheduled shredding event is set to occur on Saturday October 6<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00 a.m. to Noon at the City of La Porte's Public Works yard, located at 2963 N. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. The event is open to La Porte residents only, as capacity for local business files and external resident paperwork is not practicable. However, La Porte residents taking advantage of the service can rest assured in the security of the process, as the documents received will be immediately placed

into an on-site 95-gallon container, followed by loading onto a shredding truck, and finally being shredded on-site within minutes.

For more information on the upcoming document shredding event, please contact the City of La Porte's Public Works Department at 281-471-9650. In addition, if you would like to learn more about the dangers surrounding identity theft, as well as prevention measures, log onto the LPPD website and select the Identity Theft Protection link.